

## Communicable Diseases and Epidemiology

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### **Health Advisory: Interim Guidance for Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus and Updated Guidelines for Health Care Providers Caring for Pregnant Women and Women of Reproductive Age with Possible Zika Virus Exposure, 6 FEB 2016**

**Actions requested: Be familiar with updated CDC Zika guidance (see links below). Key points:**

- **New: Men who reside in or have traveled to an area of active Zika virus transmission who have a pregnant partner** should abstain from sexual activity or consistently and correctly use condoms during sex (i.e., vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, or fellatio) for the duration of the pregnancy.
- **New:** Pregnant women should discuss their male partner's potential exposures to mosquitoes and history of Zika-like illness (<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/symptoms>) with their health care provider.
- **New: Recommendations for men and their nonpregnant sex partners:** Men who reside in or have traveled to an area of active Zika virus transmission who are concerned about sexual transmission of Zika virus might consider abstaining from sexual activity or using condoms consistently and correctly during sex. Couples considering this decision should take several factors into account. Most infections are asymptomatic, and when illness does occur, it is usually mild with symptoms lasting from several days to a week; severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon. After infection, Zika virus might persist in semen when it is no longer detectable in blood.
- **New:** Testing of men for the purpose of assessing risk for sexual transmission is not currently recommended.
- **New: Serologic testing for Zika virus can be offered to asymptomatic pregnant women who traveled to an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission;** however, interpretation of results is complex. Because of cross-reactivity among related flaviviruses, (E.g., dengue, yellow fever, West Nile viruses), a positive IgM result can be difficult to interpret. A negative IgM result obtained 2–12 weeks after travel suggests that a recent infection did not occur and could obviate the need for serial ultrasounds. Based on experience with other flaviviruses, IgM antibodies should be present at least 2 weeks after virus exposure and persist for up to 12 weeks.
- **Recommendations for Zika virus testing of pregnant women who have a clinical illness consistent with Zika virus disease during or within 2 weeks of travel to areas with ongoing Zika virus transmission are unchanged from CDC recommendations released January 19, 2016.** Testing of maternal serum includes RT-PCR testing for symptomatic patients with onset of symptoms during the previous week; IgM and plaque-reduction neutralizing antibody testing should be performed on specimens collected ≥4 days after onset of symptoms.
- **See complete CDC guidance for full recommendations and details,** including evaluation and testing of pregnant women residing in areas with ongoing Zika virus transmission and special considerations for women of reproductive age residing in areas of ongoing Zika virus transmission.
- **There is no commercially available lab test for Zika infection; PCR and serologic testing can be arranged by Public Health; report suspected cases to Public Health at 206-296-4774.**
- **Advise pregnant women and women who may become pregnant during travel to consider postponing travel to areas with Zika transmission.**
- Pregnant women, women trying to become pregnant, and all persons who do travel to areas with Zika transmission should adhere to steps to avoid mosquito bites to prevent Zika infection and other mosquito-borne diseases.
- **See CDC links below for complete information about Zika virus infection and updated guidance.**

## RESOURCES

- General information about Zika virus and disease: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>
- Zika virus information for healthcare providers: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/hc-providers/index.html>
- Protection against mosquitoes: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2016/the-pre-travel-consultation/protection-against-mosquitoes-ticks-other-arthropods>
- Travel notices related to Zika virus: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>